

Message Text

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11

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CCO-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 SAM-01 NIC-01

SAJ-01 IO-14 OMB-01 DRC-01 /121 W

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O 050445Z FEB 74

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9467

INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 1272

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CH, VS

SUBJ: CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTRY STATEMENT ON SPRATLYS

REF: HONG KONG 1194

1. PRC FOREIGN MINISTRY STATEMENT OF FEB. 4 CHARGES THAT SAIGON'S RECENT MOVES IN THE SPRATLYS CONSTITUTES "A WANTON INFRINGEMENT ON CHINA'S TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY" AND "A NEW MILITARY PROVOCATION." THE PRC, THE STATEMENT SAYS, "WILL NOT TOLERATE" THIS MOVE BY THE SAIGON AUTHORITIES. THE STATEMENT NOTES THAT "A HEAVY BLOW" WAS DEALT THE GVN WHEN IT RECENTLY INTRUDED INTO THE PARACELS. IT DOES NOT CITE
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ADDITIONAL PROVOCATION (SUCH AS THE ALLEGED KILING OF

CHINESE FISHERMEN). THUS, THE STATEMENT IMPLIES THAT SOME PUNITIVE ACTION WILL BE TAKEN UNLESS THE GVN PULLS BACK FROM ITS LATEST "INTRUSION."

2. THE FACT THAT THE STATEMENT DOES NOT MENTION THE PHILIPPINES UNDERSCORE PEKING'S DESIRE TO LIMIT THE IMMEDIATE CONTROVERSY TO THE GVN. WE NOTICE PRESS REPORTS FROM SAIGON WHICH CITED VIETNAMESE SOURCES AS SAYING THAT THERE HAVE BEEN "INITIAL CONTACTS" AMONG OFFICIALS FROM SAIGON, MANILA, AND TAIPEI "TO FORM A TEMPORARY MILITARY PACT TO FIGHT OFF THE CHINESE SHOULD THEY ATTACK THE SPRATLYS." WE ASSUME THIS IS A GVN STRATEGEM WHICH IS UNLIKELY TO MEET WITH SUCCESS.

3. COMMENT: THE TONE OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY STATEMENT TENDS TO REINFORCE THE CONCLUSION IN REFTEL THAT THE CHANCES OF SOME CHINESE PUNITIVE ACTION AGAINST THE GVN MOVE IN THE SPRATLYS ARE FAIRLY GOOD.

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Message Attributes

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